from its daily duties. I do not mention the underſtanding, becauſe never having been exerciſed, its ſlumbering energies reſt inactive, like the lurking particles of fire which are ſuppoſed univerſally to pervade matter.

Females, in fact, denied all political privileges, and not allowed, as married women, excepting in criminal caſes, a civil exiſtence, have their attention naturally drawn from the intereſt of the whole community to that of the minute parts, though the private duty of any member of ſociety muſt be very imperfectly performed when not connected with the general good. The mighty buſineſs of female life is to pleaſe, and reſtrained from entering into more important concerns by political and civil oppreſſion, ſentiments become events, and reflection deepens what it ſhould, and would have effaced, if the underſtanding had been allowed to take a wider range.

But, confined to trifling employments, they naturally imbibe opinions which the only kind of reading calculated to intereſt an innocent frivolous mind, inſpires. Unable to graſp any thing great, is it ſurpriſing that they find the reading of hiſtory a very dry taſk, and diſquiſitions

diſquiſitions addreſſed to the underſtanding intolerably tedious, and almoſt unintelligible? Thus are they neceſſarily dependent on the noveliſt for amuſement. Yet, when I exclaim againſt novels, I mean when contraſted with thoſe works which exerciſe the underſtanding and regulate the imagination.—For any kind of reading I think better than leaving a blank ſtill a blank, becauſe the mind muſt receive a degree of enlargement and obtain a little ſtrength by a ſlight exertion of its thinking powers; beſides, even the productions that are only addreſſed to the imagination, raiſe the reader a little above the groſs gratification of appetites, to which the mind has not given a ſhade of delicacy.

This obſervation is the reſult of experience; for I have known ſeveral notable women, and one in particular, who was a very good woman—as good as ſuch a narrow mind would allow her to be, who took care that her daughters (three in number), ſhould never ſee a novel. As ſhe was a woman of fortune and faſhion, they had various maſters to attend them, and a ſort of menial governeſs to watch their footſteps. From their maſters they learned how tables, chairs, &c. were

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